

Message Text

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DEPT PASS WHITE HOUSE, FOR OFFICE OF RICHARD HARDEN

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TAGS: OTRA, OVIP (CARTER LILLIAN) XT, XY/, IT, SOPN

SUBJECT: MISS LILLIAN'S VISIT TO ROME: REPORT ON VISIT TO FAO

1. MISS LILLIAN'S VISIT TO FAO TO RECEIVE THE CERES MEDAL WAS A GREAT SUCCESS WHICH UNFOLDED IN AN ATMOSPHERE OF WARMTH AND CORDIALITY. ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE CEREMONY, RECEPTION AND DIRECTOR GENERAL'S LUNCHEON WERE GIVEN TOP-LEVEL ATTENTION AT FAO, AND THE PROGRAM WENT OFF FLAWLESSLY. ALL FUNCTIONS WERE ATTENDED TO OVERFLOWING. MISS LILLIAN MADE AN EXCELLENT IMPRESSION AS AN INDIVIDUAL, AN AMERICAN AND AS THE MOTHER OF THE PRESIDENT. THE AIR WAS ELECTRIC WITH ANTICIPATION AS MISS LILLIAN ARRIVED IN FAO'S RED ROOM TO RECEIVE HER AWARD. D.G. SAOUMA'S STATEMENT, ALREADY COPIED TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WASHINGTON, WAS WARM AND FRIENDLY AND GIVEN BY THE DIRECTOR GENERAL IN A RELAXED MANNER. MISS LILLIAN'S STATEMENT IN RESPONSE WAS RECEIVED WITH STANDING APPLAUSE. AT THE RECEPTION WHICH FOLLOWED THERE WAS A RUSH TO PERSONALLY GREET MISS LILLIAN. THERE WAS SIMILAR OPENNESS AT THE D.G.'S LUNCHEON WHERE HE TOASTED THE PRESIDENT, FAO AND MISS LILLIAN AND GAVE TO EACH OF THE AMERICAN GUESTS A COPY OF THE MEDAL WHICH HE HAD EARLIER PRESENTED TO THE

PRESIDENT'S MOTHER. COMMENT: IF ONE OF THE DG'S PURPOSES IN GIVING THE CERES MEDAL TO MISS LILLIAN WAS TO IMPROVE TIES BETWEEN FAO AND THE US, THE DG AND FAO'S PERFORMANCE WAS VERY SUCCESSFUL. THIS IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE THERE HAS BEEN RECENT TENSION IN POLICY, PROGRAM AND OPERATIONAL MATTERS BETWEEN US. THE SUCCESS OF THE VISIT SHOULD NOT, HOWEVER, CHANGE OUR RESOLVE TO INFLUENCE THE DIRECTION OF FAO ACTIVITIES, BUT INSTEAD, PROVIDE THE BASIS FOR A MORE COOPERATIVE MANNER IN WHICH THIS MAY BE ACHIEVED. END COMMENT.

2. THE HIGH DEGREE OF INTEREST IN SUBSTANCE DISPLAYED BY THE PARTY TRAVELING WITH MISS LILLIAN WAS NOTEWORTHY. UPON ARRIVAL IN ROME, MR. C. PAYNE LUCAS, DRS. JESSE STONE AND THOMAS WILLIAMS REQUESTED THAT A BRIEFING WITH FAO/WFP, SCHEDULED AS OPTIONAL, TAKE PLACE. THEREFORE, WHILE MISS LILLIAN WAS CALLING ON THE PRESIDENT OF ITALY, THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE PARTY WERE GIVEN A BRIEFING BY OSRO, WFP AND FAO. ONE KEY THEME OF THE QUESTIONING WAS WHETHER OR NOT A FOOD EMERGENCY EXISTED AT THE PRESENT TIME IN THE SAHEL AND HOW FIRM DETERMINATION OF FOOD NEED WAS MADE AND COMMUNICATED TO DONORS. THE DISCUSSION WAS INSTRUCTIVE BECAUSE, ALTHOUGH SOME OF THE PARTY WANTED A SIMPLE ANSWER FOR PUBLIC PURPOSES, THEY WERE INSTEAD BRIEFED ON THE DIFFICULTY OF MAKING SUCH ESTIMATES WHERE DATA WAS POOR, LAND MASS WAS LARGE, TRANSPORTATION AND MARKETING WAS NOT WELL DEVELOPED, LOCAL CUSTOM HAD TO BE CONSIDERED AND NATIONAL ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS WERE STRONG. A SECOND THEME OF THE DISCUSSION, WHICH IS ALSO THE UNDERLYING BASIS OF THE ENTIRE SAHEL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM, WAS THAT WHILE SOME LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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EMERGENCY AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE WAS CERTAINLY NECESSARY, WFP AND FAO AND THE WORLD MUST QUICKLY MOVE ON TO LONGER-TERM DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS TO ASSURE THAT THE PEOPLE AND THE REGION WOULD NO LONGER BE SUSCEPTIBLE TO DROUGHT AND OTHER NATURALDISASTERS. GARDNER

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